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Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities

Towards achieving internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The historic United Nations conferences and summits held in the 1990s and 2000s generated an unprecedented global consensus on a shared vision of development. That broad-based framework in turn laid the groundwork for the Millennium Summit, at which a series of challenging time-bound goals and targets were adopted. They were later collated as Millennium Development Goals, which have succeeded in galvanizing an exceptional momentum to meet the needs of the world's poorest.

While the Millennium Development Goals provide a compelling platform to address those needs, they do not, in themselves, as emphasized in the report of the Secretary-General for the September Summit,[1] present a "complete development agenda", and must be pursued as part of a "larger development agenda" that also encompasses the needs of middle income developing countries, questions of growing inequality, and the wider dimensions of human development. The "larger development agenda" must equally address issues that require long-term approaches, such as, the differential impact of globalization, greater participation of developing

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countries in global economic governance, and the question of interlinkages between development and conflict. Those issues were addressed in depth at the United Nations summits and conferences, which provide a broad-based consensus to pursue the full scope of the United Nations development agenda. The agenda cuts across a vast array of interlinked issues ranging from gender equality, social integration, health, employment, education, the environment and population to human rights, finance and governance.

The achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of the wider development agenda are closely interlinked. They will be ensured by effectively integrating the implementation of the conference outcomes with the Millennium Development Goals by focusing on issues that are closely linked with the Goals that cut across the conference outcomes. The present report identifies the core issues that hold the key to the achievement of the development goals and uses them as a tool to review progress in implementation. It concludes that there is an implementation gap, which needs to be addressed. To that end, the report makes a number of recommendations for action by Governments, the United Nations system, and the international community.

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I. Introduction

1. Eradication of poverty is neither an unattainable aspiration nor an unreachable goal. Ample evidence exists to prove that. A number of developing countries have succeeded in lifting hundreds of millions of people out of deprivation and perpetual poverty. Those men, women and children now have more and equal opportunities for progress. Those changes have been made possible by attaining and sustaining higher rates of economic growth and investing in people and being responsive to their basic needs and aspirations.

2. Solutions to the problems of impoverishment and deprivation are well known. Yet, over a billion people still live in abject poverty and struggle perpetually and intergenerationally with hunger and disease, both of which are preventable. Today, about 39 million people remain afflicted with HIV/AIDS. Diseases like tuberculosis and malaria are silently ravaging the vitality of societies and claiming millions of lives every year. Gender discrimination and bias remain pervasive. Environmental degradation and climatic change pose serious threats to the prospects of developing countries. Violent conflicts have taken a heavy toll by rolling back development.

3. Yet, there is hope and there is a growing resolve to surmount those challenges. That resolve is founded on three pillars. Firstly, the world has abundant resources and technologies to fight the menaces of poverty and hunger. Secondly, there is a much better understanding of the causes and multidimensionality of development challenges; there is also greater recognition of the interlinkages between development and security, underscoring the urgency of attaining the development goals. Thirdly, there is an unprecedented global consensus on a shared vision of development, built through the historic United Nations conferences and summits held in the 1990s and 2000s. Those conferences have served to evolve a comprehensive, consensual, normative framework to deal with the developmental challenges that cut across a vast array of interlinked issues, from gender equality, social integration, health, education, employment, environment, human rights, and population to finance and governance.

4. The conferences and summits of the 1990s in turn laid the groundwork for the Millennium Summit, at which the General Assembly adopted a series of compelling time-bound goals and targets. The Millennium Development Goals have galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world's poorest. Those Goals provide a unique window of opportunity to achieve major breakthroughs by 2015. That is the key message of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all".[1]

5. While the Millennium Development Goals provide a compelling platform to address the needs of the world's poorest, they do not, as noted in the report of the Secretary-General for the September Summit, encompass some of the broader issues covered by the conferences. They also do not address the particular needs of middle-income developing countries or the question of growing inequality and wider dimensions of human development and good governance. Among the broader issues requiring long-term approaches are the increasing divergence in development experiences; the differential impact of globalization; the need for policy space; increased transparency and greater participation and a voice for the developing world in the formulation of international macroeconomic policies; as well as the issue of how lack of development contributes in precipitating violent conflict. Those

issues were addressed in depth at the United Nations summits and conferences, which provide an agreed framework to pursue the full scope of the development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals.

II. Implementing the outcomes of United Nations conferences and summits

A. Achieving the United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals

6. The achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of the wider development agenda are deeply interlinked. They should be approached so as to complement each other. For instance, social integration and building inclusive societies have been at the core of the conferences and summits, and though they are not part of the Millennium Development Goal framework, they are essential for the achievement of the Goals. Similarly, Millennium Development Goal 7 regarding environmental sustainability has to be pursued in the larger framework of sustainable development provided by the Rio and Johannesburg conferences. Likewise, the targets for employment for youth and women included in the Goals are an integral part of the commitment to full employment embodied in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action.

7. Another important link between the Millennium Development Goals and the conference outcomes is in the area of human rights. Although the Millennium Declaration reaffirmed the commitment to protect human rights, it is the World Conference on Human Rights that clearly postulated the indivisibility and interrelatedness of democracy, development and human rights. That agreed human rights framework, including the right to development, provides a crucial foundation for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals.

8. Each conference has focused on a specific aspect of development, which is relevant to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and contributes to advancing the broader development agenda. Each conference has generated its own political momentum and constituencies committed to advancing its outcome. It is important, therefore, that the distinct identity of each conference follow-up process be maintained. At the same time, there are many elements that cut across the outcomes of the conferences. Identifying and analysing those common elements, and pursuing them as such, is equally important for progress. The need to do so, which underlies the call for the "integrated follow-up to conferences", stems from considerations that go much beyond the obvious desirability of avoiding duplication and dispersal of efforts. It responds to two related, substantive imperatives: that of optimizing the impact of the various implementation processes; and that of advancing a multisectoral approach that recognizes that the outcome in a particular sector often depends on factors outside that specific area, and purposefully designs multifaceted policies and actions to advance that approach. For example, improving mothers' literacy and enhancing access to safe drinking water and sanitation may contribute more to improving the rate of child survival than by just enhancing access to health facilities. Similarly, improving roads and making water more accessible so that children, particularly girls, do not have to fetch water from distant

sources, may increase school enrolment. At a preparatory meeting for the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, held in New York, on 16 and 17 March 2005, the Council emphasized the strong interlinkages that exist among all the development goals emerging from the conferences and highlighted the positive spillover effects of progress in each goal. The need for urgent action in the interrelated areas of health, education, sustainable livelihood, official development assistance (ODA), trade, investment and good governance was the key message emanating from that meeting.

9. The mandate of the September Summit in General Assembly resolution 58/291 of 6 May 2004 encompasses a review of the "progress made in the fulfilment of all the commitments contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, including the internationally agreed development goals" as well as a review of "progress made in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes and commitments of the major United Nations conferences and summits". Within the approaches outlined above, a major contribution that the Economic and Social Council can make in advancing the Summit's mandate is to identify the most critical policy areas that hold the key to the achievement of the development goals, and to suggest a comprehensive path for progress in that direction. The following areas are intended to capture the critical issues for action that have been repeatedly emphasized in the outcomes of the conferences and summits, as can be seen in box 1; while there are no watertight divisions between challenges and means, the first set of issues could be seen as the core challenges and the second as key instruments that are essential for implementation:

(a) Core challenges

- Eradicating poverty, hunger and malnutrition
- Advancing education and literacy
- Providing health services, preventing disease and reducing mortality
- Advancing gender equality and empowering women
- Promoting employment
- Achieving social integration and addressing vulnerabilities of social groups
- Ensuring environmental sustainability and managing the natural resource base for development
- Promoting democracy, good governance and human rights
- Addressing challenges of countries with special needs.

(b) Key instruments

- Strengthening global partnership for development
- Making macroeconomic policies work for sustained employment-generating economic growth
- Promoting science and technology for development
- Enhancing the role of civil society and private sector for development.

10. It must be clarified that highlighting the above areas is not meant to narrow the scope of the issues covered by the conferences and summits or to exclude any

issues. It is meant to serve as a tool for developing integrated policy frameworks at the national and international levels, strengthening direct linkages with strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, as advocated in the Secretary-General's report for the September Summit, and facilitating effective monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the United Nations development agenda.

Box 1

Common themes	*International conferences and summits**	*Millennium Declaration*	*Millennium Development Goal targets*
Eradicating poverty, hunger and malnutrition	ICN (1992), WSSD (1995), WFS (1996), FWCW (1995), WSC (1990)	• Make the right to development a reality for everyone and free the entire human race from want • Halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	• Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger
Advancing education and literacy	WSC (1990), EFA (1990), UNCED (1992), ICPD (1994), FWCW (1995), WSSD (1995), WEF (2000)	• Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and will have equal access to all levels of education	• Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling
Providing health services, preventing disease and reducing mortality	EFA (1990), WSC (1990), WCHR (1993), ICPD (1994), WSSD (1995), FWCW (1995), WFS (1996), WSSD (2002)	• By 2015, have reduced maternal mortality by three quarters, and under-five child mortality by two thirds, of their current rates • To have, by 2015, halted, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS, the scourge of malaria and other major diseases that afflict humanity • Help Africa build up its capacity to tackle the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other infectious diseases • Provide special assistance to children orphaned by HIV/AIDS	• Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate • Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio • Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Common themes	*International conferences and summits**	*Millennium Declaration*	*Millennium Development Goal targets*
Promoting gender equality and empowering women	WSC (1990), WCHR (1993), ICPD (1994), FWCW (1995), WSSD (1995), WAA (2002)	• Promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease • Take measures to combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	• Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015
Promoting employment	ICPD (1994), WSSD (1995), FWCW (1995), World Youth Conference (1998), FFD (2002)	• Develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work	• In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth
Achieving social integration and addressing the vulnerabilities of social groups	WSC (1990), WCHR (1993), FWCW (1995), WSSD (1995), Habitat II (1996), World Youth Conference (1998), WAA (2002), WCAR (2001), WSSD (2002)	• Global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice • Human beings must respect one another, in all their diversity of belief, culture and language. Differences within and between societies should be neither feared nor repressed, but cherished as a precious asset of humanity • Take measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of migrants, migrant workers and their families; eliminate the increasing acts of racism and xenophobia and promote greater harmony and tolerance in all societies	

Common themes	*International conferences and summits*[a]	*Millennium Declaration*	*Millennium Development Goal targets*
Ensuring environmental sustainability and managing the natural resource base for development	UNCED (1992), Habitat II (1996), WCNDR (1994), SIDS-Barbados (1994), WSSD (2002), WCDR (2005), SIDS-Mauritius (2005)	• Manage all living species and natural resources, in accordance with the precepts of sustainable development and change the current unsustainable patterns of production and consumption • Halve by 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water and stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources by developing water management strategies • Have achieved significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020 • Ensure entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol • Intensify collective efforts for management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests • Call for full implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa • Intensify cooperation to reduce the number and effects of natural man-made disasters	• Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources • Halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation • By 2020, achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers
Promoting democracy, good governance and human rights	WCHR (1993), WAA (2002), World Youth Conference (1998), WCAR (2001), FFD (2002), WSSD (2002)	• Respect fully and uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights • Strive for full protection and promotion of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights for all	• Commit to good governance, development and poverty reduction — both nationally and internationally

Common themes	*International conferences and summits**	*Millennium Declaration*	*Millennium Development Goal targets*
		• Strengthen the capacity to implement principles and practices of democracy and respect for human rights, including minority rights • Promote democracy and the rule of law • Ensure the freedom of the media to perform their essential role and the right of the public to have access to information	
Addressing challenges of countries with special needs	LDC III (2001), WSSD (2002), SIDS-Barbados (1994), LLDCs-Almaty (2003), SIDS-Mauritius (2005)	• Address the special needs of least developed countries, including adoption of policy of duty- and quota-free access for essentially all exports from least developed countries • Address the special needs of small island developing countries and landlocked developing countries • Address the challenges of poverty eradication and sustainable development in Africa, including debt cancellation, improved market access, enhanced ODA and increased flows of FDI, as well as transfer of technology	• Address the special needs of least developed countries, including adoption of policy of duty- and quota-free access for essentially all exports from least developed countries and address the special needs of small island developing States and landlocked developing countries
Strengthening global partnership for development	WSSD (1995), UNCED (1992), FWCW (1995), FFD (2002), WSSD (2002), WSIS (2003)	• Responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally • Create open equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system • Grant more generous development assistance, especially to countries that apply their resources to poverty reduction	• Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system (including good governance, development and poverty reduction both nationally and internationally) • Deal comprehensively with the debt problems to make debt sustainable in the long term, including through enhanced programme of debt relief for HIPCs and cancellation of official bilateral debt

Common themes	*International conferences and summits**	*Millennium Declaration*	*Millennium Development Goal targets*
		• Implement the enhanced programme of Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief without further delay and deal comprehensively and effectively with the debt problems of low- and middle-income countries, to ensure long-term debt sustainability • Be committed to transparency in the financial, monetary and trading systems, and good governance within countries and at the international level	• In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially ICT • In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries
Making macroeconomic policies work for sustained employment-generating economic growth	UNCED (1992), WSSD (1995), FFD (2002), WSSD (2002)	• Create an environment, at the national and global levels, conducive to development and poverty elimination • Responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally	
Promoting science and technology for development	UNCED (1992), FWCW (1995), SIDS-Barbados (1994), WSSD (1995), FFD (2002), WSSD (2002), WSIS (2003), SIDS-Mauritius (2005), WCDR (2005)	• Ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially ICT are available to all • Encourage the pharmaceutical industry to make essential drugs more widely available and affordable by all who need them in developing countries	
Enhancing the role of civil society and the private sector for development	UNCED (1992), WSSD (1995), FWCW (1995), FFD (2002), WSSD (2002), WSIS (2002)	• Develop strong partnerships with the private sector and with civil society • Work collectively for more inclusive political processes, allowing genuine participation by all citizens in all countries.	

(Footnote on following page)

(Footnote to Box 1)

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* *Abbreviations*:
EFA — World Conference on Education for All, Jomtien, Thailand, 1990
FFD — International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 2002
FWCW — Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, China, 1995
Habitat II — Second Conference on Human Settlements, Istanbul, Turkey, 1996
ICN — International Conference on Nutrition, Rome, Italy, 1992
ICPD — International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, Egypt, 1994
LDC III — Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developing Countries, Brussels, Belgium, 2001
LLDCs-Almaty — Fourth Annual Ministerial Conference of Landlocked Developing Countries, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 2003
SIDS-Barbados — Global Conference on Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 1994
SIDS-Mauritius — International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 2005
UNCED — United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1992
WCHR — World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, Austria, 1993
WAA — Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, Spain, 2002
WCAR — World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, Durban, South Africa, 2001
WCDR — World Conference on Disaster Reduction, Kobe, Japan, 2005
WCHR — World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, Austria, 1993
WCNDR — World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, Yokohama, Japan, 1994
WEF — World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal, 2000
WFS — World Food Summit, Rome, Italy, 1996
World Youth Conference — World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth, Lisbon, Portugal, 1998
WSC — World Summit for Children, New York, United States of America, 1990 and 2002
WSIS — World Summit on the Information Society, Geneva, Switzerland, 2003
WSSD – World Summit on Social Development, Copenhagen, Denmark, 1995
WSSD – World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2002

B. Progress and gaps in the implementation of the United Nations development agenda

1. Eradicating poverty, hunger and malnutrition[2]

11. The World Summit on Social Development (1995), the World Food Summit (1996) and other conferences that preceded and followed them[3] set targets for reduction of poverty, hunger and malnutrition and attempted to comprehend poverty in its varied dimensions and manifestations. The World Summit on Social Development, in particular, approached poverty in its broadest sense of not only the continual lack of adequate income to sustain basic consumption needs, but also of exclusion, marginalization and inequality.

12. The Millennium Development Goal on poverty and hunger is drawn from the agreed outcomes of the conference and summit goals and its attainment is inextricably linked with implementing the wealth of policy prescriptions that they have generated: the poverty and hunger targets cannot be achieved only by raising

incomes; there must also be concomitant improvements in basic health services, including reproductive health services, productive employment, agricultural production, environmental sustainability, gender equality, and education. That is duly recognized in the Millennium Declaration. The Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom" highlighted the fact that despite the dramatic reduction in extreme poverty in the last 25 years, many countries have become poorer, and increasing inequality in large parts of the world underscores that the benefits of development have not been evenly distributed. In addition, slums have increased and a large part of the world lacks access to basic energy needs.

13. In many developing countries, violent conflicts have left a deep trail of reversed development. It is of particular relevance that 60 per cent of the least developed countries experienced civil conflict of varying intensity and duration since 1990. **Development, in such situations, must be looked at through the conflict-prevention lens. A long-term strategic approach that simultaneously addresses both peace and development should guide policies and programmes while addressing causes of violent conflicts and post-conflict peacebuilding.**

14. The target of halving the number of hungry people in the world by 2015 is by no means on track. Analysis undertaken by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reveals several common factors that differentiate successful countries from those that suffered setbacks. Countries that succeeded in reducing hunger were characterized by relatively faster economic growth and, specifically, faster growth in their agricultural sectors (on an average by 3.2 per cent). At the same time, they exhibited slower population growth rates and lower levels of HIV infection. Those are lessons that underscore the strong interlinkages between economic growth, particularly agricultural growth rates, and the eradication of poverty, disease and the reduction of hunger. **As recommended in paragraph 42 of the Secretary-General's report, rural development — increasing food output and incomes — should be a national investment and policy priority and in Africa, particularly, a twenty-first century green revolution should be launched in 2005.**

15. At the root of the failure to attain the goals and targets of poverty eradication is slow economic growth in relation to the levels necessary to combat poverty. Scarcity of resources in many developing countries has severely constrained possibilities for budgetary spending on policies and programmes to reduce poverty levels, hunger and unemployment. Investments, including in human capital, have not been up to the scale and size that could have had a significant impact in that respect. **Countries with extreme poverty should undertake pro-poor development and investment strategies that should include scaled-up public investments, capacity-building, and domestic resource mobilization, supported by ODA. Sectoral vulnerabilities and sectoral capacities should be carefully assessed both in the medium and long term and should inform policies and programmes that should combine social integration and removal of inequalities. Core infrastructure services that include affordable housing, renewable energy, sanitation and waste management should be systematically integrated in the development strategies.**

2. Advancing education and literacy

16. Education and literacy remain at the core of development strategies. That message emanates from almost every United Nations conference and summit and was the specific focus of the World Conference on Education for All (1990); and the World Education Forum (2000), at which the Dakar Framework for Action — Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments was adopted. The summits and conferences have highlighted the multiple dimensions of education (access to education and its costs, enrolment and drop-out issues, gender bias, and literacy, including adult literacy) and have adopted detailed strategies and Platforms for Action.

17. The Millennium Development Goal on achieving universal primary education by 2015 captures the basic education goals of the conferences and summits. Although the goals agreed at those conferences and summits cover a broader canvas, their implementation will reinforce the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal on education. Interlinkages underlined in the conferences and summits, between education and sustainable development, gender, health and human rights provide the broader context in which education goals will be advanced, and most importantly, sustained over time.

18. Performance in most parts of the world has been mixed. About half of all countries, including over 60 per cent of the world's population, are likely to miss at least one of the three goals for education — universal primary net enrolment, improvement in adult literacy, and gender parity in education.

19. The Secretary-General's report identifies the task of ensuring universal primary, expanded secondary and higher education as a matter of priority. Free primary education is key to ensuring higher enrolment and fewer dropouts. However, it must be recognized that opportunity costs are involved. In households where children are not enrolled and for the most part are engaged in helping adults in informal work, the trade-off between free schooling and informal work does not necessarily work in favour of a clear choice for education. **Therefore, incentives in such situations need to be coupled with targeted interventions in several interrelated areas. To ensure universal primary, expanded secondary and higher education and free primary education need to be combined with other incentives such as free meals, as well as infrastructural improvements, such as feeder roads to schools, drinking water, health and sanitation. Assistance by donors committed under the Dakar Framework for Action needs to be stepped up.**

3. Providing health services, preventing disease and reducing mortality

20. Health is not only a fundamental human right but also a key determinant of economic development. It involves not only timely provision and appropriate health care but also access to safe and potable water, adequate sanitation, adequate supply of safe food, nutrition and housing, healthy occupational and environmental conditions, and access to health-related education and information, including on sexual and reproductive health. Therefore, interventions in the health sector with complementing strategies outside it are critical for achieving all the health-related goals.

21. Those have been the primary messages of the summits and conferences, including, the Cairo Programme of Action, adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development, 1994, and its 5- and 10-year reviews; the Beijing Declaration, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995, and Programme of Action and its 5- and 10-year review; the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS (2001); and the World Summit for Children, 1990, and its 10-year review. The Millennium Development Goals reflect those goals and targets.

22. Measures directed at influencing demographic behaviour and population dynamics, such as those contained in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development contribute significantly to the achievement of the health-related goals. While there has been some progress, there are many gaps. Every year, millions of children die before their fifth birthday; each year, over half a million women needlessly die of pregnancy-related causes owing to lack of preventive pre-natal care; access to trained birth attendants and referrals to emergency obstetric care; and HIV/AIDS continues to take its devastating toll. The HIV/AIDS pandemic continues to have an enormous impact on populations.

23. By the end of 2004, 39 million people were living with HIV/AIDS, 4.9 million of whom were newly infected in 2004 and 3.1 million people died from the disease. At its thirty-eighth session, held in 2005, the Commission on Population and Development paid special attention to HIV/AIDS and its links with poverty and emphasized the need to strengthen policy and programme linkages and coordination between HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health and their inclusion in national development plans, including poverty reduction strategies, as a necessary strategy for fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

24. Often lack of progress on issues of health and mortality are related to weaknesses in national strategies and tardy cooperation at the international level. Strong health systems are required to ensure universal access to basic health services and to build a credible defence for containing outbreaks. **Strategies for health systems need to be based on credible evaluation and projection of possible outbreak of diseases and their immediate and indirect causes. National policies and international cooperation must actively pursue training of medical and paramedical personnel, provision of basic drugs and medical and sanitation infrastructure. They require scaled-up investments, strengthened infrastructure and the elimination of user fees, and should be linked to strategies and programmes to meet other goals, such as poverty eradication, unemployment, water, sanitation, environment and education. Also, the flexibility contained in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights in addressing public needs, such as access to essential medicines, ought to be utilized more fully and effectively, for which political will needs to be demonstrated.**

4. Promoting gender equality and empowering women

25. The full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, as well as the eradication of all forms of discrimination are priority objectives of the international community (see Box 1). Gender-based violence and all forms of sexual harassment and exploitation are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person, and must be eliminated.

26. There has been tangible progress on many fronts. Life expectancy and mortality rates of women have improved; more girls are enrolled in primary education; more women are earning an income than before; there is significantly greater awareness of gender equality issues among Governments and the public at large. Over the last decade, Governments have repealed or revised discriminatory laws and increasingly recognized the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as a critical framework for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

27. Challenges remain, however. HIV/AIDS has been spreading among women; there is a lack of progress in access to primary and secondary education and in the need to ensure sexual and reproductive health and rights. Similarly, reproductive health needs are inadequately addressed and maternal mortality remains high in many countries. Women's and girls' equal rights to property and inheritance are still not guaranteed in many countries and their access to, and control over, productive resources and capital and participation in economic and political processes remain an unmitigated challenge. Similarly, the participation of women in public life has made limited progress. In another significant area, participation in the economy, progress has been negligible.

28. Promoting gender equality requires more than the legal recognition of women's rights. It also calls for changes in attitudes and sometimes in traditions and social norms, and are critical to the implementation of policies and programmes that promote and enhance women's equal participation in all aspects of society. **Gender perspective should be fully incorporated in development policies and programmes and involve more women and girls in the decision-making process on such policies and programmes. Direct interventions to advance gender equality are necessary. They could include primary school completion and equitable secondary school access for girls, secure property tenures, access to sexual and reproductive health services, protection from violence, equal access to jobs, and greater political and decision-making opportunities.**

5. Promoting employment

29. On productive employment and decent work rests the power of the poor to extricate themselves from poverty, disease and human misery. Several International Labour Organization (ILO) studies have demonstrated that an employment-oriented growth strategy, accompanied by a rise in productivity, is the key to reducing the level of poverty through the income effect in the short run by raising the productive capacity of the workforce and enhancing the competitiveness of firms, especially small and microenterprises.

30. In its commitment 3, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action laid down the objective of promoting the goal of full employment as a basic priority of economic and social policies. The commitment to the promotion of full, freely chosen, decent and productive employment, a fundamental component of any development strategy, was renewed at the forty-third session, held in 2005, of the Commission for Social Development, at which the Commission reviewed the progress of the Copenhagen commitments at the end of 10 years. The Millennium Declaration called for strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work.

31. Global performance in promoting full and productive employment has so far been disappointing. The past 10 years have witnessed a phenomenal rise in unemployment levels. In 2003, there were 186 million unemployed, up from 140 million a decade earlier. That represents the highest recorded level of unemployment. The increase was mostly among young people, escalating world youth unemployment to 14.4 per cent, over twice as high as the world unemployment rate of 6.2 per cent. Women continue to remain most strongly affected by unemployment. In the few countries where job growth has taken place, it has been disproportionately concentrated in insecure, informal employment with low wages and few benefits. Workers in the informal sector carry a high risk of becoming working poor. Of the over 2.8 billion workers in the world, nearly half still do not earn enough to lift themselves and their families out of poverty.

32. **Global, regional and national policies must be redirected and refocused on productivity-enhancing investments and policies to generate employment for unskilled and semi-skilled labour, in both rural and urban areas. Enhancing the human capital of the poor through greater access to education (especially primary and secondary), skills and health care, improvements in physical infrastructure, easy access to credit, and the creation of social safety nets produces results. Poverty-reducing strategies such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) should recognize the critical role of employment and the need to invest in human capital. Steps should also be taken to implement the ILO Decent Work Agenda, which calls for the integration of economic and social objectives in the areas of employment promotion, rights at work, social protection and social dialogue.** As underscored in the report of the Secretary-General to the September Summit, without dynamic, growth-oriented economic policies supporting a healthy private sector capable of generating jobs, income and tax revenues over time, sustainable economic growth will not be achieved.

33. Greater policy coherence and integration are equally important. The 2004 report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization,[4] and resolution 59/57, in which the General Assembly took note of the report, stressed the need for greater coherence among multilateral organizations in their global economic, financial and social policies, and stronger institutions to embed social goals in the operation of global production systems.

6. Achieving social integration and addressing vulnerabilities of social groups

34. Fostering social integration was one of the core issues addressed by the World Summit on Social Development. The Copenhagen Declaration contains a specific commitment to promoting social integration by fostering societies that are stable, safe, just, and tolerant and respect diversity. The Programme of Action called for promoting social justice and progress; promoting non-discrimination, tolerance and mutual respect, and eliminating physical and social barriers with the aim of creating a society accessible to all. In the Political Declaration adopted at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, held at Geneva in June/July 2000, on the five-year review of the Social Summit, Governments recognized that social integration is a prerequisite for creating harmonious, peaceful and inclusive societies.

35. Lack of access to education, the persistence of poverty and unemployment, and inequitable access to opportunities and resources could cause social exclusion

and marginalization. That could also lead to social disintegration, which contributes to eruption of violent conflicts. The Millennium Declaration subsumes social integration in its articulation of peace, security, development and human rights.

36. Since the Summit, progress has been made in some areas, especially in accession to legal instruments dealing with economic, social and cultural rights and elimination of discrimination. In addition, the Summit's approach to social integration has been echoed in other international conferences. Habitat II emphasized the negative impact on society when consideration of the principles of equity and social integration are ignored, and addressed in detail the concerns expressed by the World Summit for Social Development about homelessness and the provision of adequate housing. The Summit guided the development of the conceptual framework for a society for all ages, the unifying theme of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

37. Notwithstanding those developments, the social integration component of social development is losing ground. It has not been fully integrated into the general development discourse outside social development circles. The challenge is to reinstate the concepts of social integration at the centre of all policies and to find practical ways and means to achieve a "society for all". At its forty-third session, the Commission for Social Development called for a return to a people-centred approach. The Commission also emphasized the need **for more integrated efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of the broader Copenhagen commitments. Thus, the concepts of social integration developed at Copenhagen would need to be further mainstreamed into efforts to achieve the Goals.**

38. The Copenhagen Summit also called for the protection and full integration of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons into the economy and society. Disadvantaged groups mentioned in the Copenhagen Declaration include older persons, persons with disabilities, youth, migrants and indigenous peoples as well as refugees and the internally displaced. There is still a shortage of comprehensive and systematic national plans to address the concerns of vulnerable groups. A large proportion of the vulnerable groups lives in poverty and suffers from hunger.

39. Nonetheless, much attention and momentum have been generated in individual areas supported by different groups. For instance, at the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the principle of social integration was reaffirmed. In the area of disability, the General Assembly, in its resolution 56/168 of 19 December 2001, decided to establish an Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that is currently addressing that issue. Also, the Special Rapporteur on disability reports yearly to the Commission for Social Development. In the area of indigenous issues, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was created as an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council with a mandate to discuss those issues. However, **there is a need to ensure that policy interventions to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of halving poverty and hunger should take into account the needs and concerns of those vulnerable groups.**

7. Ensuring environmental sustainability and managing the natural resource base for development

40. Starting with the Earth Summit in 1992, the world has increasingly recognized the important links between environmental sustainability, poverty eradication and unsustainable production and consumption patterns, and the importance of protecting and managing the natural resource base. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in 2002 in Johannesburg, the international community recognized that economic development, social development, and environmental protection are three interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development.

41. Despite those commitments, ensuring environmental sustainability and managing the natural resource base remains a critical challenge. It is extremely important for Governments to make the goal of sustainable development an essential part of their national development strategies. To that end, countries need to adopt time-bound targets, and priorities for action such as forest management, preservation of the ecosystem and pollution control.

42. Currently, global warming linked to climate change and rising sea levels poses serious risks. The entry into force in February 2005 of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is an important achievement but the first commitment period extends until 2012. **As proposed in the report for the September Summit, Governments need to work towards an international framework to address the challenges beyond 2012.** Another challenge is the unprecedented rate of loss of biodiversity. That needs to be reversed and it is critical for achieving Millennium Development Goal 7. **The Convention on Biological Diversity and the Johannesburg commitment to achieve a significant reduction in the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010 needs to be fully implemented.** The degradation of more than a billion hectares of land needs to be tackled as well. **Provisions of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa need to be implemented fully and quickly.**

43. Deforestation and unfortunate conflicts over control of forests and other natural resources need to be controlled. **As the Millennium Declaration reiterated and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation underscored, there must be greater collective efforts for the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.**

44. The 2004 report of the Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation indicates that from 1990 to 2002, 1.1 billion people gained access to an improved source of drinking water and over 1 billion to sanitation facilities. That, however, is inadequate for the achievement of the relevant Millennium Development Goal. The target of halving the proportion of people without access to sanitation by 2015 is even further off-track. **Concerted action needs to be taken now for meeting the goals of enhancing the access to safe drinking water and sanitation.**

45. The World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg set a target for countries to develop integrated water management and water efficiency strategies by 2005. The experience of several countries suggests that Integrated

Water and Resources Management (IWRM) is an effective way of coordinating strategies across sectors and geographical regions and having an impact on poverty. **Countries should take immediate measures to adopt and implement IWRM strategies.**

46. The global objective of reversing the depletion of ocean fisheries has not progressed significantly with more than 75 per cent of fish stocks being over-fished, exploited to their maximum biological limits or recovering from depletion. Since more than 90 per cent of global fish stocks are under national jurisdiction, **Governments must ensure national implementation of international fisheries agreements to restore fish stocks to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield by 2015, as envisaged in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.**

47. Similarly, 1.6 billion people — one quarter of the world's population — remain without access to electricity. The global share of electricity generation, in renewable energy (except hydroelectricity) remains at the low level of 1.7 per cent. The 2004 International Conference for Renewable Energies, held in Bonn, Germany, adopted an International Action Programme for Renewable Energies, which marked an important step towards increasing the share of renewable energy.

48. Over the last decade, natural disasters have led to economic losses and tragic deaths. In 2004 alone, over 300,000 people were killed and 139 million were affected with economic losses of about US$ 88 billion. Unless more determined efforts are made, disasters will become an increasingly serious obstacle to the achievement of the development agenda. Not only will the severity of crises deepen in poorer countries, but disasters will also have a greater global impact. The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, in January 2005, identified strategic objectives and priority areas to reduce disaster risk which should be pursued.

49. The Indian Ocean tsunami has highlighted a number of shortcomings in early warning, as well as in international preparedness, risk reduction and response capacities. Measures are being taken to strengthen the rapid response arrangements for immediate humanitarian relief for disasters. **As for improving the early warning capacities, the establishment of a systematic worldwide capability for early warning of all types of natural hazards, including floods, droughts, landslides, heat waves, volcanic eruptions and other natural threats, is essential. That capability should build on existing national and regional capabilities but should also create new capabilities, if needed.**

8. Promoting democracy, good governance and human rights

50. Democracy, human rights and good governance are central challenges in the process of development and all the international conferences and summits have stressed their importance. The Millennium Declaration also underscored that promoting democracy, strengthening the rule of law, as well as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development is crucial to progress. The United Nations development agenda and Millennium Development Goals are based in a human rights framework as they follow from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political

Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and the right to development. Human rights are also a requirement for reaching the Goals.

51. Strategies to implement the development agenda require a transparent, accountable and participatory system of governance, based on the rule of law. There is also a need to ensure civil, political as well as economic, social and cultural rights. An important part of good governance is accountable and transparent public administration and participation in decision-making. **Countries should adopt comprehensive policy frameworks to create an efficient, effective and responsive public administration.**

52. Progress in promoting democracy, good governance, human rights and participation in decision-making require integrated action and simultaneous advances in other areas, particularly poverty eradication and education. In many countries, Governments are introducing reforms and broadening citizen participation in governmental processes. Democracy and political participation are today more widespread than in previous decades. In 1980, 54 countries, with 46 per cent of the world's population, had some or all of the elements of representative democracy. By 2000, that number had grown to 121 countries, with 68 per cent of the world's population. While global progress on political rights and freedoms has been uneven, participatory processes are improving overall, but most rapidly in Africa.

53. Widespread corruption and the interlinkages with activities of organized criminal groups impact directly upon the poor. Crime and corruption subvert established systems of local governance. **Countries are strongly urged to ratify the United Nations Convention against Corruption, so that that important legal framework that supports the development goals enters into force before the September Summit.** The Convention, which was opened for signature in December 2003, thus far signed by 118 States and ratified by 15, requires a minimum of 30 ratifications for it to enter into force.

54. Good governance is equally essential at the global level. Representation of developing countries in global governance needs to be strengthened. It is becoming increasingly clear that unless the necessary political will is mobilized to find pragmatic and innovative ways to approach the issue with a view to promoting more democratic, effective and modern institutions, progress will remain quite limited.

9. Addressing challenges of countries with special needs

55. The international community has long recognized Africa's special needs. Africa remains the poorest region and the one farthest from achieving the internationally agreed development goals. The region is making progress in creating the conditions for accelerating its development pace, including through institutional steps such as the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development. As recognized in the report of the Commission for Africa, led by British Prime Minister Tony Blair, **it is critical that we now deliver the implementation of existing international commitments towards the region.**

56. The least developed countries — two thirds of which are in Africa — represent the most vulnerable segment of humanity. Extreme poverty, limited human, institutional and productive capacity, susceptibility to external economic shocks, external debt, natural and man-made disasters and communicable diseases, often compounded by geographical handicaps, hamper efforts to improve the quality of

life of their people. In those circumstances, countries can be caught in "poverty traps" from which they cannot escape with "good policies" alone.

57. At the core of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries is the recognition by the international community of the special needs of those countries and the commitment to forge partnerships to overcome their specific problems. Regional cooperation has an especially important role to play in trade, infrastructure, transport, energy policies, critical areas for economic growth and poverty reduction.

58. The geographical handicaps of landlocked developing countries — half of which are also least developed countries — and small island developing States impose specific, serious constraints on their development. The Almaty Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries focuses on implementation of specific actions in five priority areas, namely transit policy issues, infrastructure, trade, international support, and implementation and review. The Mauritius Strategy for the Small Island Developing States addresses their constraints due to remoteness, narrow resource base and vulnerability to natural disasters. **The commitments made in the Brussels Programme of Action, the Almaty Programme of Action and in the Mauritius Strategy need to be urgently and fully implemented.**

59. Donor countries have agreed to provide at least 0.15 per cent of their national income to assist least developed countries, and aid flows to that group are on the rise. Despite the improvement, the current level is below 0.1 per cent. The least developed countries receive about one third of all aid flows, but the donor community needs to further strengthen its efforts to meet the promise. In turn, landlocked countries received $10 billion in 2003, up from $6.9 billion in 1990, while aid flows to small island developing States amounted to $1.7 billion, from $2.1 billion in 1990.

60. Implementation of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative continues to progress slowly, owing mainly to the difficulty that eligible countries have in complying with the conditions required to receive debt relief. By the end of 2004, 15 countries (of which 11 are least developed countries) had reached the completion point, another 12 had reached their decision point, and the decision had been taken to extend the HIPC Initiative for an additional two years. Total debt relief accorded to the 27 countries that have reached either the "decision point" or the "completion point", together with other debt relief measures, represents a two-thirds reduction in those countries' overall debt stock. Notwithstanding the increased resources that debt relief makes available, **HIPC countries continue to face difficulties in reconciling the objectives of promoting long-term growth and reducing poverty and achieving and maintaining debt sustainability: these must be quickly addressed through dialogue and discussion. As suggested in the report of the Secretary-General for the September Summit, HIPCs should receive 100 per cent official debt cancellation. Many heavily indebted non-HIPC and middle-income countries will also require more debt reduction.**

C. Key instruments for achieving the United Nations development agenda

1. Strengthening the global partnership for development

61. The pursuit of development and poverty eradication requires joint action. While all major conferences and summits have affirmed that principle, the Millennium Declaration and the Monterrey Consensus offer a comprehensive framework for global partnership for development and establishes a new compact for development based on mutual responsibility and accountability.

62. Developing countries have undertaken to promote good governance, pursue economic growth, generate domestic resources, adopt sound economic policies and invest in infrastructure and human resources as well as promote a dynamic private sector and an effective civil society. However, in today's interdependent world, national efforts cannot succeed without an enabling international environment. That includes strong coordination of macroeconomic policies among the leading industrial countries aimed at greater global stability; reducing exchange rate volatility; larger and more broadly distributed international investment flows, combined with appropriate technological transfers; a truly development-oriented trade system; significantly larger and more effective ODA flows; and deeper debt relief.

63. Foreign direct investment (FDI) remains the largest source of net private financial inflows to developing countries, but continues to be unevenly distributed and concentrated in a few key countries. In 2003, the top 10 recipients accounted for almost three fourths of total flows to developing countries. In general, economies with robust growth, solid infrastructure, skilled and productive labour, and adequate regulatory frameworks, support institutions and services attracted larger FDI flows. Equally important are measures to increase the benefits of the presence of foreign firms for the domestic economy, in terms of technology transfers, employment and domestic value added. **Strong linkages between foreign affiliates and local suppliers should be fostered so as to upgrade the value chain in selected industries and deepen the developmental impact of FDI. Host and home countries should jointly establish international venture funds to encourage domestic investment through joint-venture activities.**

64. As a result of low net overall financial flows and large foreign exchange accumulation by developing countries, those countries experienced a seventh consecutive year of negative net transfer of financial resources, at an estimated record level of over $300 billion in 2004. However, some of the net transfer reflected positive rather than negative developments: strong growth in export revenues led to trade surpluses in some countries, which were used as a means to improve their self-insurance against possible balance-of-payments difficulties, either by increasing their foreign exchange reserves or by reducing their foreign debt. The perceived need for such self-insurance represents a major deficiency of the international financial system.

65. For those countries that do not have access to private financial flows, ODA is a critical source of external financing. ODA has recovered from its decline in the 1990s, reaching $78.6 billion in 2004, a 4.6 per cent rise in real terms. While that recovery is encouraging, it is normally expected that ODA should provide new cash resources that allow recipient countries to increase development spending. However,

a large portion of the recent increases in ODA has taken the form of expenditures on security and emergency relief.

66. Despite its recovery, ODA is just one quarter of 1 per cent of donor-countries' national income. Only a handful of countries — Denmark, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden — currently meet or exceed the target of 0.7 per cent. Seven more donor countries have pledged to reach the target before 2015. The European Commission recently proposed to set an EU target of 0.56 per cent for 2010. That would trigger an estimated additional 20 billion euros by 2010. It would also bring EU countries closer to the target of 0.7 per cent by 2015. If all the new commitments made so far are honoured, official aid is expected to exceed $100 billion by 2010. That would still be about $50 billion short of the ODA resources required to meet the Millennium Development Goals, and well below the level required for other development goals. **As recommended in the report of the Secretary-General for the September Summit, donors that have not already done so should establish timetables to achieve the 0.7 per cent target by no later than 2015, starting in 2006 and reaching 0.5 by 2009. Donors should also achieve the target of 0.20 per cent for ODA to least developed countries by 2009.**

67. With efforts to increase the level of ODA, there is also an urgent need to improve its quality. That involves the way aid is disbursed and utilized. Several donors have announced their intention to provide more aid in less transaction-intensive forms, such as budget and sector support. Currently, less than 30 per cent of total ODA reaches developing countries' budgets. There is also the need to provide more predictable and multi-year commitments on aid flows; overcome weaknesses in partner countries' institutional capacities to develop and implement results-driven national development strategies; and ways to better integrate global programmes and initiatives into partner countries' development agendas. Partners have resolved to improve the effectiveness of foreign aid. In the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Ownership, Harmonization, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability, in March 2005, 91 countries and 25 international organizations made specific pledges to that end. They also agreed to introduce "indicators" to monitor progress in the areas of ownership, alignment, harmonization, results and mutual accountability. As recommended in the report for the September Summit, **in the follow-up to the Forum, donor countries should set, by September, timetables and monitorable targets for aligning their aid delivery mechanisms with partner countries' national development strategies.**

68. Multilateral Development Banks can play a significant role in channelling funds to low-income countries, mitigating the impact of volatility in financial markets on middle-income countries, by providing access to long-term borrowing during times of crises, and as facilitators and catalysts for private-sector investment. **Enhancing their role should become a priority of South-South cooperation.**

69. To mobilize additional financial resources, increasing attention is being devoted to innovative sources of finance. At the initiative of Brazil, Chile, France, Germany and Spain, a "menu of options" has been developed, which includes: an International Finance Facility; global environmental taxes; taxes on international financial transactions, on aviation fuel or ticket prices and on arms sales; use of special drawing rights (SDRs) for development purposes; private donations and other types of voluntary contributions for international development; affinity credit

cards; a global lottery; global premium bonds; and mobilizing workers' remittances for development. The International Finance Facility is designed to provide increased funding quickly by employing financing arrangements that would allow future aid commitments to be used before they are disbursed. A pilot project aimed at ensuring universal vaccination of children using the International Finance Facility mechanism, as well as funds from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, is currently being planned. **Innovative sources of financing should be given serious consideration and a commitment should be made to launch an International Finance Facility this year.**

70. About 65 per cent of developed countries' imports from developing countries (in value) were admitted duty-free in 2003, compared to 45 per cent in 1996, the first year for which data are available. Although the Uruguay Round trade agreements lowered overall tariff rates, relatively high import tariffs are still levied on goods strategically important to developing countries, such as textiles, clothing and farm products. As suggested in the report for the September Summit, **the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations should be completed no later than 2006 with results that are equitable and clearly contribute to advancing the broader development agenda. Market access for all exports from the least developed countries should be provided duty-free and quota-free.** The upcoming Sixth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong (China) in December 2005 will be critical to that end. The new round of negotiations under the General System of Trade Preferences announced at the UNCTAD XI Conference in São Paulo in June 2004 is central to the objective of reducing tariff protection among developing countries.

71. Tariffs are not the only barrier to developing-country exports. Government subsidies to agricultural producers in developed countries provide an unfair advantage against imports. While total financial support provided in developed countries as a share of GDP steadily declined between 1990 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available, the amount of support has remained about $350 billion per year during the same period. Other barriers, such as the misuse of phyto-sanitary and technical barriers also hinder the exports of developing countries. While the potential benefits of the removal of agricultural subsidies to developing countries overall are vast, their extent for poor net food-importing developing countries, such as most least developed countries, is debatable. Addressing the challenges faced by those countries would require an appropriate mix of domestic and international policy measures to overcome supply-side constraints, facilitate a shift towards higher value-added segments in sectors and address issues of tariff escalation.

72. Increasing demand for raw materials, especially in China, has been an important factor in reversing, at least temporarily, the long-term downward trend in non-oil commodity prices in recent years. Nonetheless, the continued instability of such prices and its negative impact on commodity-dependent developing countries has yet to receive concerted attention. **Efforts by those countries to restructure, diversify and strengthen the competitiveness of their commodity sectors should be supported. The potential for regional integration and cooperation to improve the effectiveness of traditional commodity sectors and support diversification efforts should also be exploited.**

73. The movement of people across borders is an additional area requiring joint action. Maximizing the potential benefits of international migration, while managing its challenges, such as labour shortages in some regions and "brain drains" in others, calls for a common policy framework that makes the process more orderly and addresses its multidimensional aspects. **This should be addressed at the high-level dialogue on migration to be held by the General Assembly in 2006.**

2. Making macroeconomic policies work for sustained and employment-generating economic growth

74. Global conferences have recognized that broad-based and equitable economic growth is central to the achievement of the agreed development goals and the Millennium Development Goals. It directly facilitates poverty reduction and expands resources and capacities for achieving other development goals. Accelerating pro-poor economic growth that creates sufficient numbers of productive jobs is therefore especially essential. In recent years, there has been a very encouraging trend in the growth performance of developing countries, thanks to continuing progress in improving policies and governance. In 2004, developing countries recorded their fastest growth in more than a decade, achieving average GDP growth of nearly 6 per cent.

75. While that is good news, it is short of what is needed in some areas for the time-bound goals to be reached. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, achieving the income poverty goal requires attaining average annual GDP growth of about 7 per cent over the next decade, almost double the region's recent growth rate. There is a similar need to substantially accelerate growth rates in the least developed and other low-income countries. Making that "quantum leap" possible requires a major increase in investment, deepening progress in macroeconomic management, strengthening the public sector and improving the climate for private sector activity. A strong private sector is central to sustained economic growth and higher employment. There is a great need for special incentives for promoting small and medium-size enterprises, as they help in creating opportunities for self-employment for people with limited resources. Microfinance is often a valuable instrument to promote such activities and should be further pursued.

76. Moreover, increasing inequalities in large parts of the world highlight the need to integrate and mainstream social policies into macroeconomic frameworks. **Macroeconomic and social development policies should be aimed at the reduction of vulnerabilities and strengthening of capacities to eradicate poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and disease and protecting the environment.** That was the focus of a Development Forum held in New York on 14-15 March 2005, as part of preparatory meetings for the Economic and Social Council. There, the preliminary findings of a World Bank study on the relationship between equity and development showed that different kinds of inequalities may be mutually reinforcing. Inequality can lead to inefficient use of capital and human resources; countries with higher inequality require more resources to reduce poverty; and higher inequality leads to weaker political and economic institutions. Therefore, the promotion of equality is a good development policy, at the national and international levels.

77. Increasing interdependence of national economies in a globalizing world and the emergence of rule-based regimes for international economic relations mean that the space for national economic policy i.e., the scope for domestic policies, especially in the areas of trade, investment and industrial development, is now often framed by international disciplines, commitments and global market considerations. Therefore, **Governments need to evaluate the trade-off between the benefits of accepting international rules and commitments and the constraints posed by the loss of policy space and pursue an appropriate balance between national development agendas and international disciplines and commitments. National development strategies incorporating the agreed goals should become the basis for implementation strategies. Trade, aid and debt agenda should be built around the national development strategies with clear support for them from all development partners, including multilateral financial institutions.**

3. Promoting science and technology for development

78. Technological progress and innovation are the long-term drivers of economic growth. Scientific and technical capabilities also determine the ability to provide clean water, good health care, adequate infrastructure and food. Technology also has a key role in protecting the environment while promoting more efficient utilization of the natural resource base. A global alliance for ICT and development would help enhance the achievement of core development goals and a development-oriented and inclusive information society.

79. Almost all conferences and summits have emphasized the importance of science and technology for development. Technological progress is essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and for the implementation of the development agenda. Yet progress in enabling developing countries to benefit from innovation and technology has been limited. To date, most of the developing countries remain users of technology. In fact, they face three major challenges in that area. Firstly, they have neither the institutional structure nor the resources to invest in human resources and entrepreneurial capacity-building. Secondly, they lack capacity to transform knowledge into goods and services, which requires close links between knowledge generation and enterprise development. Thirdly, there is a high concentration of technology generation in developed countries and overly protective intellectual property rights regimes and global rules.

80. The newly emerging technologies like the information and communication as well as bio and nano-technologies are opening up new frontiers for promoting development. The benefits of ICT for development are already well known but the potential still remains to be fully exploited. ICT can help developing countries "leapfrog" and leverage resources, enhance productivity, take advantage of global knowledge and information flows and integrate beneficially into the world economy.

81. **Developing countries need to make building science, technology and innovation capabilities a central objective of their development strategies.** They need to invest more resources in higher education and in institutional development. Links between universities and firms can help in turning knowledge into economic value.

82. These efforts have to be supported by the international community. **Concerted international interventions are needed to ensure the availability of adequate infrastructure for science and technology for development and to promote**

research and development in currently underfunded areas such as agriculture, health and environmental management. The role of the private sector and foreign direct investment is instrumental in transferring skills and technology as well as in building absorptive capacity. These should be promoted through incentives. Intellectual property protection systems need to be designed that take into account the special needs of developing countries. Innovative, pro-poor technology solutions and business models need to be developed through public-private partnerships to achieve critical breakthroughs, in health and education, rural development and small and medium-size enterprise development, especially for women.

4. Enhancing the role of civil society and the private sector for development

83. The summits and conferences recognized the role of civil society and the private sector in achieving the goals and targets set out at those meetings. The Millennium Declaration has also recognized their role and commits Governments "to develop strong partnerships with the private sector and with civil society organizations in pursuit of development and poverty eradication" and "to give greater opportunities to the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, in general, to contribute to the realization of the Organization's goals and programmes".

84. Civil society has shown tremendous potential in promoting the United Nations development agenda. It can catalyse action within countries by mobilizing support and by ensuring that leaders fulfil their commitments. On many issues ranging from poverty eradication to environmental conservation, they have helped in launching major initiatives. To provide opportunities for sharing of experiences and for building partnerships, civil service organizations can build global networks, which have been particularly beneficial for CSOs from developing countries. They have also emerged as key players in delivering services and humanitarian assistance. **There is a need to ensure that Governments facilitate and encourage the increasing role of civil service organizations in those areas of activities.**

85. An NGO/Civil Society Forum was organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in New York on 10 March 2005 in preparation for the 2005 Economic and Social Council High-Level Segment. Its key messages were that it is not too late to reanimate political will to reach the development goals; pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals should not overlook the commitment to human rights, democracy and good governance; developed countries that had not done so, should honour their ODA commitment; gender should be integrated as a cross-cutting theme under all Millennium Development Goals; and, ICT should include innovative design that builds capacity for governance, for job creation for youth, and partnership with the private sector.

86. Private sector companies are today partnering in many parts of the developing world, not only in national macroeconomic policy formulation, but also in programmes that seek to take advantage of productive strengths, including technological skills, and improving national productivities and integrating with the world economy in a more advantageous way than before. At the international level, the United Nations Global Compact seeks to foster that cooperation more strongly through a broad-based dialogue. Those efforts are helping in making progress towards comprehensively harnessing multi-stakeholder energies for the achievement

of the development goals. **Public-private sector partnerships driven by broader goals of development and not solely based on market forces of profitability are key to achieving the developmental goals and need to be actively promoted at all levels.** That message is embedded in the outcomes of conferences and summits as well as in the Millennium Declaration.

D. Conclusions and recommendations

87. Progress in the implementation of the development agenda has been made in several areas, but is slow and uneven. Given the current pace, neither the Millennium Development Goals nor the broader United Nations development agenda, of which they are a part, will be achieved. That lag between implementation and commitments must be bridged. First and foremost, the United Nations development agenda and its components, particularly the Millennium Development Goals, must be truly embraced at the national and international levels. Its goals and objectives should be acted on as achievable targets and not approached merely as aspirations or mechanical indicators. They should be backed by practical strategies and long-term commitments. Secondly, existing sectoral approaches to development must be replaced by a more integrated, synergistic and holistic framework, which the United Nations development agenda provides. Thirdly, the necessary resources must be invested in the pursuit of that agenda. The realization of those goals must be considered a priority by all. Fourthly, the institutional impediments at the national and international levels that have contributed to the slow pace of progress must be urgently addressed. Finally, constant monitoring and evaluation are essential to ensure that the process of implementation remains on track. And that must be a truly integrated process to ensure that the pace of progress is even and that one goal is not being pursued at the expense of others or by ignoring other equally important sectors.

88. The report of the Secretary-General for the September Summit focuses on issues and actions that are critical for the timely realization of the Millennium Development Goals. The report attempts to define a framework to advance the development-related recommendations in that report by pointing to issues and actions that are key to furthering the development agenda in a mutually reinforcing way with the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals. Projecting and advancing that framework should be an integral part of the contribution that the Economic and Social Council, from the vantage point of its comprehensive mandate for the advancement of economic and social progress, makes to the successful outcome of the Summit. While specific recommendations have been made under each theme, that section captures the core elements of the broader development agenda that the Council may wish to commend to the Summit.

1. Principles guiding the implementation of the comprehensive United Nations development agenda

The policy goals encompassed in the United Nations development agenda provide a solid, consensual basis for setting a development course that is human-centred and inclusive and, as such, both equitable and sustainable. Those goals, which are derived from the United Nations Summits and Conferences as well as the Millennium Declaration include but are not limited to the areas indicated in paragraph 9 of the present report.

2. Achieving the United Nations development agenda: key instruments

(a) Undertake development and investment strategies

As recommended in the Secretary-General's report to the September Summit, each developing country in extreme poverty should undertake national development and investment strategies aimed at the Millennium Development Goals and based on the comprehensive United Nations development agenda, that should include scaled-up public investments, capacity-building, domestic resource mobilization and, official development assistance;

(b) Identify and assess: needs, vulnerabilities and capacities

Needs, sectoral vulnerabilities and national capacities should be carefully assessed in the short but also in the medium and long term and should inform policies and programmes under the overall development and investment strategy;

(c) Recognize and build on the interlinkages

Each country's development, investment and implementation strategies should be well grounded in the interlinkages among the core elements of the United Nations development agenda, and should build upon them in an integrated manner;

(d) Make the process participatory and inclusive

The process of developing nationally owned, nationally driven and internationally supported strategies should be open, participatory, and consultative and include all key stakeholders. Respect for human rights, good governance and removal of inequalities and discrimination must be the foundation of the process;

(e) Mainstream the broader development objectives into macroeconomic policy

Monetary, fiscal, administrative and management policies should aim at strengthening capacities to achieve the core elements of the United Nations development agenda;

(f) Enhance the role of civil society and the private sector in development

Enable civil service organizations and the private sector to become active partners in the development process at every stage;

(g) Strengthen the role of science and technology to achieve the development agenda

Developing countries should develop policies and programmes to enable science and technology to better serve the development goals. Developed countries should assist in that endeavour;

(h) Resources are an imperative and international partnership a must for achieving the development agenda

The commitments made in various conferences to provide the means and resources to achieve the development goals should be fully implemented.

3. Monitoring, evaluating and reporting are key to measuring progress, identifying impediments and taking corrective actions

The targets and goals of the development agenda should serve as a concrete operational matrix of benchmarks and as the anchor for development support. There is a need to undertake more comprehensive and integrated reviews of the implementation of national development plans and programmes to achieve the comprehensive development agenda.

III. Towards achieving the comprehensive United Nations development agenda: the role of the United Nations system

89. There are two major steps required to gear the whole United Nations system towards achieving these goals.

(a) Firstly, United Nations system organizations should integrate and align fully their own policies and programmes with the priorities and strategies of national Governments, international commitments, the agreed goals and targets embodied in the United Nations development agenda, particularly the Millennium Development Goals. They should develop coherent and integrated system-wide approaches to the achievement of key development objectives, which can be effectively translated into national policies and strategies. At the country level, United Nations operational activities should be designed to support such strategies. Linkages between this work and the normative work of the United Nations should be strengthened. Coordination with other actors in the field should be actively pursued.

(b) Secondly, at the intergovernmental level, there should be a coherent, coordinated and integrated monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the development agenda.

A. At the inter-agency level

90. The organizations of the United Nations system have made significant progress in integrating the Millennium Development Goals and the goals of the United Nations development agenda in their programmes of work and in developing system-wide approaches to support its implementation at the country level. Since 2001, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board (CEB) for Coordination has been actively engaged in reviewing and assessing actions by the organizations of the system at all levels to ensure that the Millennium Declaration and the Goals contained therein are a key, integral part of the priorities orienting the work of the system.[5] In addressing key strategic issues that cut across the programmatic, sectoral interventions of its member organizations, CEB has sought to reinforce synergies among the implementation activities of United Nations organizations.

91. In addition to the more institutionalized forms of inter-agency cooperation, comprising CEB and its high-level committees, as well as the United Nations Development Group and the other United Nations Executive Committees, there are extensive networks of informal collaborative arrangements and joint initiatives that focus on supporting the implementation of the Declaration and the outcomes of other global conferences. For instance, coordination is now part of the strategic

planning of the three Rome-based agencies FAO, IFAD and WFP, which formed a United Nations System Network on Rural Development and Food Security. Cooperation schemes also exist in various fields: humanitarian, education for all, health, youth, gender, environmental sustainability, governance, human rights and HIV/AIDS. The Integrated Framework is a telling example of a collaborative scheme between the World Bank, IMF, ICT, UNCTAD, UNDP and WTO and in partnership with bilateral donors to build trade-related capacities.

92. At the country-level, existing instruments — the Common Country Assessment, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and its Results Matrix, thematic groups and joint programming initiatives — are all being geared to advance more strategic and integrated approaches. The UNDAF process, in particular, is being purposefully focused to assist Governments in translating internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, into national policies, strategies and programmes, especially poverty reduction strategies where they exist.

93. Within the UNDAF process, the Results Matrix provides an important instrument for United Nations system organizations not only to orient their programmes and operations around the development goals but also to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their operations. It is also an important instrument for building national capacities to monitor and evaluate implementation, including by strengthening national statistical systems.

94. While the effort towards closer system-wide policy dialogue to create coherence and collaboration have made some headway, the diverse, highly decentralized structures of the system pose obvious limitations to strategic and operational coherence across all areas covered by the United Nations development agenda. Beyond overcoming such limitations, a continuing challenge for the system is to ensure that the wealth of constituencies and the diverse modalities of interventions are harnessed towards advancing a comprehensive set of common policy objectives. The experience of the past 15 years provides many elements of guidance to further progress in that direction. **The inclusive way in which United Nations conferences and summits were prepared and conducted generated system-wide "ownership" of, and commitment to, their outcomes that must continue not only to be nurtured, but also to be extended to the broader, common agenda that those conferences have, together, generated.**

95. Among those conferences, the Monterrey Conference has shaped a common policy framework for the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO that now needs to be furthered and deepened. The Millennium Development Goals have generated an unprecedented system-wide mobilization of efforts and resources that must not only be vigorously pursued, but also be made to characterize the way the system operates in all areas coming within its purview. It should involve, across organizations, much greater mutual reinforcement between policy development and operations. It should extend, beyond development operations, to a deeper understanding of the linkages between the three sets of "freedoms" defined in the Secretary-General's report and of ways to effectively act on those linkages. And it should encompass not only collaboration within the system itself, but also the wider partnerships that are necessary to advance those freedoms.

96. **At the operational level in particular, the absence of comprehensive and integrated systems for monitoring progress across the development agenda and**

the diversity of approaches have tended to reduce the ability of United Nations organizations and agencies to develop fully coordinated responses to changing demands. Agencies with largely an advocacy or operational vocation may have too narrow a focus and agencies with a primarily normative focus may not be able to impact or effectively contribute to the work carried out by the system at the country level. **There is clearly a need to build stronger and more systematic synergies between agencies with varying capacities of normative and strategic functions.**

97. Moreover, the existence of multiple intergovernmental bodies governing the United Nations system operational activities tends to constrain initiatives aimed at enhancing the coherence and impact of the United Nations system operational activities at the country level, from the harmonization and alignment of United Nations system programmes to joint programme formulation, execution and fund mobilization. Some of those constraints can, however, be overcome through a parallel effort at policy coordination within Governments, and a better coherence of the policy proposals that the secretariats put to their governing bodies. **That effort must be nurtured by imperatives that go beyond operational efficiency and project the enhanced results that greater coordination will bring about. And it must be accompanied by strong, concrete support for the system-wide role of the Resident Coordinator in promoting a united and cogent advocacy of the international development agenda in its totality at the country level.**

98. General Assembly resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004, on the latest triennial policy review of operational activities, by broadening the scope of those reviews and linking recommendations on operational activities and their coordination to the effort to advance the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and the global conferences, has made an especially significant contribution to charting the way ahead for the system's development cooperation work. Particularly relevant in that regard is the Assembly's call for the active involvement of a wider spectrum of United Nations organizations in the CCA and UNDAF processes, so as to enhance the relevance of those processes in furthering the overall development agenda. The resolution also challenges the Economic and Social Council to enhance its contribution to advancing the coherence of the system's operational activities and the overall effectiveness and impact of development cooperation, including in relation to funding modalities. A more incisive role by the Economic and Social Council in guiding the work of the intergovernmental and inter-agency machinery governing the United Nations system operational activities should be an integral part of the ongoing reform effort. The Council should also provide a venue for engaging other actors involved in operational activities at the country level in the effort to make development cooperation a more effective, purposeful instrument of progress in reaching the internationally agreed development goals.

B. At the intergovernmental level

99. The system currently in place for reporting on and monitoring progress in pursuing the United Nations development agenda reflects a fragmented and sometime overlapping approach. Currently, the monitoring and evaluation of the agenda is being pursued through a number of tracks, which are not closely integrated. The General Assembly undertakes annual reviews of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, including the Millennium Development Goals. Substantive reviews of the implementation of conferences are conducted by the

functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council. The Council itself is mandated to promote an integrated and coordinated approach to conference follow-up from a thematic perspective. It also deals with the reviews of particular conferences, such as the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. There is no comprehensive review process which provides the full picture of the implementation of the United Nations development agenda.

100. The lack of such a comprehensive view affects the capacity to translate the system's normative work into regional and country-level policies. A sectoral approach also prevails within national Governments in dealing with development issues, and is evident in the debates and deliberations of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its functional and regional commissions, the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes and the governing bodies of the other United Nations agencies. That hampers the ability of the system to advance different dimensions of the development agenda in a comprehensive, mutually reinforcing way.

101. The Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions will need to weave thematic coherence in their work. They could organize and coordinate their work around the broad themes that, together, comprise the elements of the United Nations development agenda. A similar approach could be extended to the work of the regional commissions. Both the functional and regional commissions of the Council have an important role to play not only in terms of reporting but also in terms of furthering their analytical and policy contributions towards effective implementation.

102. At the global intergovernmental level, the Economic and Social Council, because of the breadth of its mandate, convening capacity and inclusive approach to the discharge of its responsibilities, is especially well placed to serve as a platform where the many ongoing assessment exercises can be harmonized and overall progress in implementing the United Nations development agenda can be systematically and comprehensively monitored. Peer reviews of the actions being taken by developed and developing countries in fulfilling their commitments, drawing on appropriate inputs from the regional commissions and other relevant bodies, could be the basis for the performance by the Council of that essential function.

103. A related, key function is to harness development cooperation efforts to maximize their contribution to advancing the United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals. Also that key task is currently being performed in a fragmented way and the approach is, too often, process- rather than result-oriented. There is also a need to enhance the effectiveness and coherence of the support that development cooperation lends to capacity- and institution-building in the pursuit of the development agenda. That could be achieved through a forum that brings together concerned policymakers from both developed and developing countries and all relevant development institutions — United Nations system organizations, the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO, OECD/DAC — to elaborate priorities and policy orientations for the implementation of the development agenda. It should lead to an ongoing assessment of the impact of implementation policies, strategies and actions and serve to generate new, positive ideas on the most conducive, national and international, environment for development, including financing. By bringing together national actors and international institutions that

would normally not interact with each other, it could help to advance multisectoral approaches and to broaden partnerships at the national, regional and international levels. And its outcomes should build on and, in turn, inform the work of the governing bodies of the United Nations operational entities, other relevant parts of the system, and the wider development community.

104. Across those two, obviously related, functions, institutionalizing coordination within the system, not only at the inter-secretariat CEB level, but also among intergovernmental bodies, is increasingly essential. One possibility to that end would be to plan, under the aegis of the Economic and Social Council, periodic meetings of the Bureaux of the governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations to identify coherent policies and coordinate monitoring and evaluation work concerning the implementation of internationally agreed development goals. That would not replace but build on the increasingly effective high-level intergovernmental meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and UNCTAD.

105. Beyond those periodic occasions for dialogue, the need is increasingly felt, in this interdependent and interconnected world, for timely and effective responses to economic and social challenges and developments, as and when they occur. The Council should be able to convene at an appropriate level and in a timely manner, whenever required, in order to address issues and developments which have major immediate or potential implications for development, and to give impulse and direction to efforts to confront and overcome crises and steer progress. That should focus on emergency situations, but should also extend to the Council's ability to help orient decisions in other forums relevant to advancing the development agenda.

106. The above observations and the recommendations below build on the vision and thrust of the Secretary-General's recommendation on United Nations reform in his report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all". They lay down the components/elements of new institutional arrangements under the Council's aegis that can serve to advance a more comprehensive view of development issues and their solution; facilitate consensus on global, regional and national strategies to pursue the implementation of the United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals; and ensure that support to such strategies is maximized.

107. While some of the functions outlined above could be pursued through adjustments in the level of participation and current functioning of the Council, others may well require a more fundamental rethinking of the Council's current structures and methods of work. A message from the Council as to its openness and readiness to affect the changes necessary to maximize its contribution to coherent and sustained progress in advancing the United Nations development agenda should be an integral part of the Council's contribution to an effective outcome of the September Summit.

C. Recommendations

108. The following is recommended:

- **The Economic and Social Council should establish arrangements that would enable it to keep under constant review progress in implementing**

the United Nations development agenda, particularly the Millennium Development Goals, with a view to strengthening the system's capacity for a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of its implementation and promoting effective policies and strategies at the national, regional and global levels. To these ends, the Council should organize peer reviews of progress, drawing on its functional and other commissions, particularly the regional commissions, and other international institutions.

- **The Economic and Social Council provides an appropriate platform for serving as a Development Cooperation Forum, where global, regional and national strategies and policies for development cooperation can be reviewed, and policy guidance provided geared to maximizing its contribution to the pursuit of the United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals. An existing meeting or segment of the Council can be transformed once every two years into such a forum.**

- **The Economic and Social Council should be the venue to pursue a continuous policy dialogue within the system, engaging the chairs of intergovernmental governing bodies of the funds, programmes, as well as the United Nations specialized agencies and the international financial and trade institutions. Periodic meetings of the Bureaux of the governing bodies of major United Nations system organizations under the aegis of the Council should serve to enhance policy coherence, coordination and cooperation and contribute to a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of progress towards the achievement of the United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals.**

- **The Economic and Social Council should convene timely meetings to mount coordinated responses to natural disaster and other actual or imminent threats to development, and to provide timely inputs or address developments in other forums that have major implications for achieving the development goals.**

IV. The September Summit

109. As stated in the report of the Secretary-General for the September Summit "the urgent task in 2005 is to implement in full the commitments already made and to render genuinely operational the framework already in place".[6] The September Summit provides a unique opportunity to ensure that a comprehensive framework encompassing the United Nations development agenda is reaffirmed and embraced at the highest level and supported with concrete commitments to implement it.

110. **The challenge for the high-level segment is to contribute to an ambitious outcome of the Summit, building on the outcomes of the 10-year reviews of the Beijing, Cairo and Copenhagen conferences, held earlier this year. To that end, the Economic and Social Council needs to endorse the core elements of the development agenda which have emanated from the conferences and summits. Also, it needs to identify the specific actions required by Governments, United Nations organizations, multilateral financial institutions, private sector and civil society to implement the agenda. By doing so, the Council can make a significant contribution in setting the stage for a bold and visionary outcome of**

the Summit that would include "a pact for action, to which all nations subscribe and on which all can be judged".[6]

Notes

[1] See A/59/2005, para. 30.

[2] Here, poverty eradication is not being considered as one individual goal but in all its manifestations and as it relates to the issues of education, health, gender equality, environmental sustainability, etc. The purpose is to promote a more integrated view of these goals and targets.

[3] ICN (1992); UNCED (1992), ICPD (1994), FWCW (1995), WSSD (2002), FFD (2002) and the 5-year and 10-year reviews as applicable.

[4] A/59/98-E/2004/79.

[5] See 2005 Comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration: report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

[6] See A/59/2005, para. 72.